

THE MARYLAND WILDLIFE ADVISORY COMMISSION  
MINUTES – JULY 20, 2005

Chairman Christopher Dollar called the meeting to order at 9:45 a.m.

**Approval for Minutes from June 2005 Meeting**

- The June 2005 Meeting Minutes were adopted without changes.

**Waterfowl Season Proposals**

- Presentation by Larry Hindman, Waterfowl Project Leader
  - 1) Larry outlined the Maryland Waterfowl Season Proposals within the Federal Frameworks [**Attachment A**].
  - 2) The habitat conditions were explained to the Commission members:
    - (a) No information was received from the Eastern Survey; therefore most of the information presented is from the traditional survey areas.
    - (b) The Breeding Ducks May Survey started in early part of May when it was warm and dry. There was a considerable amount of rain in the late May and through June, which produced poor early nesting species.
    - (c) The late breeding ducks fared good.
    - (d) The data from North Central America and Prairie Canada demonstrated that the May ponds habitat numbers are 37% higher than last year numbers and 12% higher than the long term average.
    - (e) This year's breeding duck population was estimated at 32 million ducks similar to last year, and an additional 5% above long-term average.
    - (f) Pintails have been a concern – while remaining at 38% below long-term average.
    - (g) Scaup had the lowest breeding population on record for this species, while remaining at a 27% below long-term average.
    - (h) Canvasback breeding population was down this year with 521,000 breeding pairs, while remaining at an 8% below long-term average – the population should rate average.
  - 3) The Eastern Survey will be available after the Atlantic Flyway Council Meeting.
  - 4) U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service may issue a depredation permit for crop damages caused by resident geese. This permit is very difficult to obtain.
  - 5) Mr. Kurt Fuchs from the Maryland Farm Bureau will provide crop damage data caused by resident geese to Chairman Dollar.
  - 6) Canvasbacks are impacted by several elements. Canvasbacks may be more attracted to decoys than other species, as such are more accessible to harvest. The weather conditions play a larger role in the successfulness of the Canvasbacks population numbers.
  - 7) Commissioners asked strategy questions regarding ways of achieving the goal of 250k Canada breeding pairs with the proposed seasons. Commissioner Pascal and Commissioner Lamp pointed out their concerns for the canvasback population. Maryland has been very conservative regarding the waterfowl seasons .

**AP Migratory Canada Goose Status Report**

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- Larry summarized the Breeding Pair Survey of Canada Geese in Northern Quebec – 2005 [**Attachment B**].
- The AP Canada goose band recovery data is used to delineate the seasons.

**Waterfowl Season Proposals Wrap-up**

- The Waterfowl Season Proposals discussion was tabled until after the August 15, 2005, Waterfowl Season Proposals Meeting. The Wildlife Advisory Commission will provide recommendations to the Department at the August 17, 2005 WAC meeting.
- The Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Wildlife and Heritage Service (WHS) will announce the proposed 2005-2006 late waterfowl hunting seasons. The public comment period on the proposed seasons and bag limits will be open through August 19th. A public meeting will also be held on August 15th at 7:00 pm at Broadneck Senior High School, 1265 Green Holly Dr., Annapolis MD. Public [comments will be received online](#); written comments regarding the proposals may be faxed to 410-260-8596 or mailed to Waterfowl Regulations, Wildlife and Heritage Service, Tawes State Office Building, 580 Taylor Avenue, Annapolis, MD 21401. In addition, comments will also be received over the phone by calling 410-260-8540. Public comments will be accepted through the close of business on Aug. 19. Final announcement of the 2005 seasons selected by the DNR [will be made in early September](#).
- Commission members are encouraged to attend the public meeting on August 15<sup>th</sup>.

**New Legislative Concepts Finalized**

- This is an opportunity for the Commission to submit ideas as to what the Commission would like to see addressed during the upcoming Legislative Session.

- Alternative Funding Sources (Group Discussion)
  - 1) Commissioner Julio asked why is there need for additional funding to be allocated to the WHS.
    - (a) Four funding sources make up the WHS budget: hunting licenses revenue, Pittman-Robertson Fund, Special Funds, and General Funds.
    - (b) The Wildlife and Heritage Service Budget was reduced from a \$2-million dollar allocation of General Funds to a pro-rated allocated amount for vehicle replacements only (around \$26,000 dollars), which means no allowance for operational functions.
    - (c) Special Funds have decreased due to declining of hunting licenses sales.
    - (d) For the last several years, Federal funds have been stable.
    - (e) Most of the reserves funds were used during the 2005 Fiscal Year.
    - (f) With the daily operational obligations, and the increasing economical essentials, such as salaries and health care benefits, WHS has no allowances for these items.
  - 2) Non-Consumptive User Fee

**Break at 11:00 and Resume at 11:10 a.m.**

**Maryland Park Service Update**

- Stephen D. McCoy, Chief of Resource Interpretation and Education for the Maryland Park Service
- Over 300,000 individuals visited Maryland parks during the July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend.
- In August, the Park Service staff members will be interviewing for 34 positions to cover many of the daily operational assignments.

**Natural Resources Police Update**

- No report.

**Maryland Farm Bureau Update**

- Presentation by Kurt Fuchs, Maryland Farm Bureau (MFB) Representative.
- MFB has been reviewing the Wildlife Comprehensive Diversity Plan for comments. Many of the items suggested have been implemented, such as, buffers, best management practices including Nutrient Management Plans, and the use and regulation of pesticides and herbicides.
- MFB members have been encouraged to develop long-term conservation plans for their properties to ensure water quality and wildlife habitat benefits.
- MFB plans to ask the Department for liberalization concerning the Conservation and Protection Action policies, not sure if it means acquisitions or easements on certain lands.

**Old Business**

- WAC roles at the public meetings...there is one scheduled for August 15<sup>th</sup> at the Broadneck High School. Commissioner Freeland suggested at the previous WAC that members should attend based on geographic location.

**New Business**

- Chairman Dollar asked Mr. Baker from the Maryland Outfitters and Guides Association (MOGA) for comments.
  - 1) MOGA is compiling recommendations for deer and/or turkey outfitters/guides to be licensed by the Department.
  - 1) MOGA representatives would like Dove Season start date to remain unchanged. Commissioner Julio asked for more clarification from the MOGA.
  - 2) Chairman Dollar asked the MOGA for feedback on the Canvasback Season and report back to the Commission.

**Adjournment**

- Chairman Dollar adjourned meeting at 11:20 a.m. The next meeting will be held at 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, August 17, 2005 in the Tawes State Office Building, C-1 Conference Room, Annapolis, Maryland.

**Attendance**

Members:	R. Brown, C. Dollar, W. Freeland, L. Julio, J. Lamp, R. Pascal, J. Scarborough
Guests:	D. Baker, K. Fuchs
Staff:	B. Beyer, K. Blizzard, B. Harvey, L. Hindman, H. Lynch, S. McCoy, T. Spencer
Absent:	L. Adams, G. Fratz, C. Garner